

SECRET

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

of

NO 1 CANADIAN WAR CRIMES
INVESTIGATION UNIT

re

SHOOTING OF CANADIAN
PRISONERS OF WAR

by

THE GERMAN ARMED FORCES

at

MOUEN
NORMANDY, FRANCE
17 JUNE, 1944

DISTRIBUTION OF THIS REPORT

<u>HOLDER</u>	<u>COPY NO.</u>
Department of National Defence (to include C.G.S., A.G., War Crimes Section, Records)	1,2,3,4
Canada House	5
War Crimes Advisory Committee, Department of External Affairs	6,7,8
D.A.G., C.M.H.Q.	9
Canadian Military Headquarters (to include Chief of Staff, Records, and Historical Section)	10,11,12
United Nations War Crimes Commission	13
Spares	14,15,16,17,18,19,20

P A R T I

- A FACTS DISCLOSED BY SHAEF COURTS OF INQUIRY
- B FINDINGS OF SHAEF COURTS OF INQUIRY

MOUEN CASE

A - FACTS DISCLOSED BY SHAEF COURT OF INQUIRY

NOTE: This case was originally investigated and reported on by SHAEF Court of Inquiry, dated 28 July 1944, and was further dealt with by another SHAEF Court of Inquiry in a Supplementary Report dated 19 April 1945.

1. At about 1800 hours 17 June 1944, seven Canadian Prisoners of War under German escort, were brought to the residence of M. Alexis STILLIERE, Mayor of the village, in MOUEN, Calvados, Normandy, which village was then occupied by troops of the Tross (A Echelon) of 12 SS Pionier Bn., 12 SS Pz Div (HJ). These prisoners appeared to be in a very exhausted condition.

2. Shortly after their arrival the prisoners were interrogated by a German officer or warrant officer who examined their papers. They remained in a shed at the back of the Mayor's house until about 2200 hours when the seven Canadian prisoners, under escort of fourteen fully equipped, armed and helmetted German soldiers, were seen marching through the village. They were taken to a rather secluded field on the outskirts of the village where they were lined up and shot dead just at dusk.

3. About 0900 hours 18 June 1944, four French civilians under orders of German soldiers, dug a grave under a large tree in the same field where the seven Canadians had been shot the previous evening, the grave being sufficient for seven bodies.

4. Around 1200 hours 18 June 1944, German soldiers were seen to drag bodies from a wood bordering the field in question and to throw them into the freshly dug grave. When the bodies had been deposited in the grave some of the German soldiers were seen to fire revolver shots into the grave. The grave was then filled in by the Germans.

5. At about 1500 hours 18 June, German soldiers were seen with paper money and documents which they said belonged to the Canadian soldiers. They burned the paper money at the house of a French civilian and took the other documents away with them. One of the soldiers was a sergeant and another was identified as SS Mann Alfred FRIEDRICH, (deceased) of 3 Coy., 12 SS Pionier Bn.

6. On 22 and 23 July 1944, the grave in the above mentioned field, on the outskirts of MOUEN, was opened and the bodies of seven Canadian soldiers were exhumed. An autopsy was performed on each body which was identified and showed wounds as under:

B.49476 Tpr PERRY C J - 3 small calibre bullet wounds of chest and leg.

P A R T I I

C SUMMARY OF NEW EVIDENCE

D REPORT OF NO 1 C.W.C.I.U.

MOUEN CASE

C - ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

1. No additional evidence has been obtained which in any way relates to the circumstances of the capture, interrogation, shooting and secret burial of the seven Canadian prisoners of war.

2. It is now clear that the Tross of each of the companies as well as the Bridging Column "B" of the Pionier Bn were located at various houses in the village of MOUEN. (Exhibits 1 and 2). These were in charge of the following officers or NCOs:

HQ Coy	-	HSF PIÑKERNEL
1 Coy	-	Not known
2 Coy	-	SchF DEMUTH
3 Coy	-	HSchF TERWORT
4 Coy	-	USchF BOECKER
Bridging Column "B"	-	USF RICHTER

3. USF STREMME, OC Machine Gun Pl, 4 Coy, 12 SS Pionier Bn, states (Exhibit 1), that OSF BISCHOFF, OC 4 Coy, Pionier Bn, also acted as Ic (Intelligence Officer) of the Pionier Bn although these duties were not extensive as the Bn CO, SBF MÜLLER, spoke English and interrogated prisoners himself. BISCHOFF was very seldom in the front line and may have spent his time at the Tross. USF STREMME's opinion is that the officers most likely to have been at the Tross at any time were HSF PINKERNEL, OSF BISCHOFF, and possibly the Adjutant, USF BAEHTZ, a very young officer. He says that OSF BISCHOFF was "quite capable of shooting prisoners" but that HSF PINKERNEL was "an old woman" and probably would not do such a thing.

4. USF STREMME who was in daily contact with OSF Paul KURET, OC 2 Coy, gives some confirmatory evidence of KURET's contention that he never left the front line from the time of his arrival in the area until his capture.

5. SS Mann NIMMERFROH of 2 Coy, Pionier Bn, says (Exhibit 3), that OSF KURET told the troops of 2 Coy before the attack on NORREY-EN-BESSIN on 10 June 1944 that the "Allies were taking no prisoners, particularly none of us" -- meaning SS troops. He also states that this was followed by an order, read out by KURET to these troops that they would take prisoners.

6. According to a statement by a French school teacher, Mlle P. BOURDOIS, originally received by a Sergeant of 39 Field Security Sec (Br) (Exhibit 4) a young German SS NCO boasted to her that he had taken two British prisoners of war near Cheux on 25 June 1944 and after taking their cigarettes and chocolate from them, he killed them. This NCO showed her the cigarettes.

7. The seven murdered Canadian soldiers belonged to Queens Own Rifles of Canada and 6 Cdn Armd Regt (1 Hussars) which were the units involved in the attack on LES SAULLETS and LE MESNIL-PATRY launched from NORREY-EN-BESSIN on the afternoon of 11 June 1944 (See evidence of Major F.E. WHITE, Exhibit 5 in Report of the SHAEF Court of Inquiry re Shooting of Allied Prisoners of War by the German Armed Forces in the vicinity of LE MESNIL-PATRY, LES SAULLETS, BURON and AUTHIE, Normandy, 7 - 11 June 1944).

P A R T I I I

RECORDED EVIDENCE

- EXHIBIT 1. RECORDED EVIDENCE OF
USF Wilhelm STRELLE
DATED 21/23 JUL 45.
- EXHIBIT 2. RECORDED EVIDENCE OF
OSF Paul KURET
DATED 6 AUG 45.
- EXHIBIT 3. RECORDED EVIDENCE OF
SS MANN Walter NILMERFROH
DATED 7 AUG 45.
- EXHIBIT 4. TRANSLATION OF THE SIGNED
STATEMENT OF MILLE P BOURDOIS
DATED 1 JUL 44.
- EXHIBIT 5. CERTIFIED ABSTRACT FROM
RECORDS, ACTON, RE SEVEN
MISSING CANADIAN SOLDIERS.

EXHIBIT NO 1NO. 1 CANADIAN WAR CRIMES INVESTIGATION UNIT

RECORD OF THE EVIDENCE

of

Wilhelm STREMME,

(Untersturmführer - 4th Company - 12 S.S. Pionier Battalion, 12 S.S. Panzer Division (Hitler-Jugend))

INVESTIGATING TEAM

Investigator - Examiner:

Lt-col BJS Macdonald, OBE ED,
Essex Scottish Regiment, C.A.

Assistant Investigator - Cross-Examiner:

Major H.H. Griffin, MC,
Royal Canadian Artillery, C.A.

Interpreter:

Capt JJ Stoneborough,
Canadian Intelligence Corps, C.A.

Court Reporter:

C-96564 WO 1 T.S. Hubbard,
Corps of Military Staff ClerksIN ATTENDANCE

Major L.C. Carroll, J.A.G.

Col Harold H. Richardson,
Commanding Officer,
PW Camp, Alva, Okla., USA.Capt Henry H. Fox, Jr.,
J.A.G.D.,
United States Army.

The Investigating Team assembled at PW Camp, Alva, Oklahoma, U.S.A., on 21/23 July 1945, for the purpose of taking on oath the evidence of PW A763417 Untersturmführer Wilhelm STREMME.

The Interpreter and Court Reporter were reminded of their former oath.

The witness, having been duly sworn, was examined by Lt-Col BJS Macdonald as follows:

Q.1 What is your name?

A.1 STREMME, Wilhelm.

Q.2 What is your rank?

A.2 Untersturmführer

Q.3 What is your prisoner-of-war number?

A.3 A763417

----- (The witness points to a position on Cheux Map, Sheet 37/16 SE 1:25,000 at approximately Map Reference 907697).

In this original depression overgrown with a little bit of ground, there was the Battalion Headquarters. I suppose that at one time it had been used as a kind of quarry or chalk pit..

Q.27 How deep was this depression? Was it as deep as the height of this room?

A.27 There were a number of deepish points and one quite deep one, as far as I remember now, but it was deeper than this room. I must emphasize that I cannot remember individual features as it was of no consequence to me. (Room is approximately ten feet deep). At its deepest point it was about three metres, I would say.

Q.28 What would be the length and breadth of this depression?

A.28 I would say twenty by thirty metres.

Q.29 What troops were in occupation of the village of le Mesnil-Patry on the 11th of June?

A.29 There was, of the Pioneer Battalion, the 2nd Company, the right wing of the 2nd Company, the Company where I was. In the village itself there was nothing but in front of the village toward Norrey, there was on my right wing, the 2nd Company, then the heavy Machine Gun Platoon of the 4th Company, then the 3rd Company.

Q.30 Now, which troops were in Les Snullets?

A.30 I do not know who it was; I don't even know if there was anyone in there. I never left the front line.

Q.31 Were the troops of the Pioneer Battalion the only troops holding the particular front at le Mesnil-Patry on 11th June?

A.31 Who was to the right and the left of us, I, of course, cannot say. After the enemy tanks had rolled over us some German tanks appeared behind us and among us.

Q.32 Do you know from which of the tank battalions these tanks came?

A.32 I believe, without being certain, that the German tanks were part of my Division but to be frank I cannot say so. While the tanks were fighting we stayed well down in our holes as we had no weapons to fight tanks with and after awhile I looked out and saw some German tanks about 100 metres, on their way back. I could see no identifying marks,

May I add that I, once while on a tour of inspection, saw some tanks belonging to my Division lying behind le Mesnil, but I do not remember whether it was before or after this attack.

Q.33 Under the command of what Regimental Commander was your Battalion operating at that time?

A.33 We were under no regimental command. We were a Divisional unit with our leader Sturmbannführer Mueller.

Q.34 But was your unit holding a sector allotted to the 26th Regiment?

A.34 That may be possible but I as a platoon commander know nothing about it. They did not tell the platoon commanders.

Q.35 How many metres from the nearest building in le Mesnil-Patry was Battalion Headquarters?

A.35 I cannot say precisely as I never walked that way, but, I would say about 300 metres.

Q.36 Now, in what Company were you?

A.36 4th Company.

Q.37 And were you the commander of the Machine Gun Platoon?

A.37 Yes, platoon commander of the Machine Gun Platoon.

Q.38 Who was the Company Commander?

A.38 At the end, OSF Bischoff.

Q.39 Who was the Company Commander on the 11th June?

A.39 OSF Bischoff, but he was not in the front line. He was with the Battalion Headquarters.

Q.40 Who was in command of the Company in the Line?

A.40 The 4th Company consisted only of two platoons, the heavy machine gun platoon led by me and the heavy mortar platoon, but that was not put into action until later, hence, I was in command of that part of the 4th Company, which was committed to action on that day.

Q.41 Did you come under the general command of OSF Kuret of the 2nd Company?

A.41 Yes sir. To be more precise, I was told to liaise with him. I was not under his command. I had to maintain contact between the 2nd and 3rd Company.

Q.59 One of whom was a non-commissioned officer, and the other three were private soldiers?

A.59 Yes sir.

Q.60 Now, was the non-commissioned officer a tank man or an infantry man?

A.60 That one cannot say.

Q.61 Did you notice whether one of them was wearing a wooden shoe?

A.61 I do not remember that. I do not believe so far that I would have noticed.

Q.62 And do you feel quite sure that none of them had been wounded?

A.62 Certain I am not, but I don't believe it.

Q.63 Did any of them have any difficulty in walking?

A.63 That I cannot say because we crept back on all fours for the simple reason that the hill went upwards slightly and was under observation from the Canadian front.

Q.64 Now, would you point out on the map as closely as you can where it was that these prisoners were captured?

---(The witness points to place on Cheux Map, Sheet 37/16 SE France 1:25,000, approximate map reference 91057000)

Q.65 Now, in whose charge did you put these prisoners?

A.65 I myself gave them to SBF Mueller. I remained there for a little while because I tried to put in a question or two to find out exactly where the front line was, but after one or two questions SBF Mueller sent me and my men away.

Q.66 Do you know what SBF Mueller did with these prisoners?

A.66 No sir.

Q.67 Did you ever ask him?

A.67 No sir. SBF Mueller sent me away rather abruptly. I had the feeling that he was displeased that I was present at the interrogation, and perhaps even asked a question or two. I well understood his mood. It is the Battalion Commander's job to question prisoners. Still, on the other hand, I as Platoon Commander was very interested to find out what was going on in front of my position.

Q.68 When did you withdraw from the general area of le Mesnil-Patry?

A.68 Approximately two or three days before the big attack which smashed up my Battalion

entirely I was sent back with some other people to participate in a course on the use of the "Goliaths" (Beetles). I took in that four day course but I never used them in battle.

Q.69 Now, what was the date on which you went back to go on that course?

A.69 I cannot precisely remember when, but I would say two or three days before the Battalion was knocked to pieces because I heard the news that it had been knocked to pieces while I was on the course.

Q.70 Now, was it prior to the time that you went on the course that your Battalion withdrew from the vicinity of le Mesnil-Patry?

A.70 No sir. They were there and they were smashed to pieces in that attack.

Q.71 Now, are you referring to the attack that went in on the 24th of June or the one earlier than that?

A.71 Yes, the 24th June. That was the one. The 24th or 26th of June.

Q.72 Well, now, do you say that up until that time the German troops were in occupation of le Mesnil-Patry?

A.72 Yes.

Q.73 You are mistaken in that because le Mesnil-Patry was occupied by the Canadians on the 18th of June?

A.73 I cannot say about that. I am referring to the positions slightly off le Mesnil-Patry, which we held until the Battalion was smashed up. The front originally extended in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction to the east of le Mesnil-Patry and then later, probably about the 18th June, we took up a position to the south of le Mesnil-Patry in an east and west direction extending from approximately Map Reference 905695 to 914695 (Cheux Map, Sheet 37/16 SE France 1:25,000). As the line was taken back slightly, as I have just shown, the Battalion Headquarters was taken back too. I do not know where Battalion Headquarters was as I never was sent there or went there. I was told to report to the field dressing station where I would be told whether I had to proceed on course. I did meet the Battalion Orderly Room clerk who I suppose had his quarters there while the Battalion Commander was further forward. Now that I think of it, the Battalion Orderly Room was at the same place as the field dressing station.

Q.74 Which was here?

A.74 Yes.

---(Witness points to place, approximate Map Reference 906674 - Cheux Map.)

- 1 Q.98 What time did you arrive in the vicinity of Caen? Did you get there on the 6th June or was it the following day?
- A.98 It must have been at least two days later. I am mainly endeavouring to find a point to orient myself. We drove day and night.
- Q.99 Now, how soon after you arrived in your forward position was it that the attack went in on Norrey-en-Bessin? Was it the same day or the following day?
- A.99 It may have been the day after. It may have been two or three days after.
- Q.100 Do you remember when the Division Commander, Witt, was killed?
- A.100 I only remember that it was shortly after the invasion started. I suppose a week afterwards.
- Q.101 Now, the attack which was put in on Norrey-en-Bessin which was supported with machine gun fire was the first engagement you had with the enemy; is that correct?
- A.101 No sir. We did not participate in that attack. My Company Commander got unfavourable comments from other Company Commanders that he was not there to assist with mortar and heavy machine gun fire. We spent the night when that attack took place in a small village or in a meadow near the small village to the west of the highway running from Caen to Falaise. On the next day we got up into the front line. On that day we drove only to le Mesnil-Patry and stayed for a short while in a garden in the southern portion of that village. I was shown to my positions and in the evening of that day I took up the position which I have shown to you.
- Q.102 Then, when was the enemy attack put in on le Mesnil-Patry, the following day or several days later?
- A.102 I am inclined to believe it was the next day, but I cannot say it with certainty.
- Q.103 Now, on what day did you leave for your course?
- A.103 Approximately three days before the attack.
- Q.104 In other words, about the 21st or 22nd of June?
- A.104 Say approximately the 22nd of June.
- Q.105 And you had been serving with your Battalion in the line up until that time?
- A.105 I never left my position.
- Q.106 Where was your Company Tross?
- A.106 My Company Commander who was lying behind us used to go there from time to time.

Q.107 And your Company Commander's name was what?

A.107 BISCHOFF.

Q.108 And you say he used to go to the Tross?

A.108 I myself was on poor terms with Bischoff. He was not in the front line and I made many requests for food and tobacco but he was very short of it and could only give us very small portions.

Q.109 What eventually happened to Bischoff?

A.109 I did not like him.

Q.110 But what happened to him?

A.110 Bischoff managed to avoid capture on the day when the Battalion was totally smashed. He had a habit of remaining behind. He was never seen in the front line. He received a small wound, a flesh wound, I believe, through his left, upper thigh -- nothing much -- and he went back with the remainder of the 4th Company with the exception of me and another man who had been sentenced to a prison term, in order to reform his Company and probably also to reform the Battalion. In contrast to me he was well regarded by the Battalion Commander. He moved back, I suppose to collect as many men as he could and then move back to our old place at Pacy-Hardencourt. I don't believe he was captured during the invasion.

Q.111 Were the Company Tross at Mouen?

A.111 That is quite possible. I heard that name once.

Q.112 When you went back to your corps did you not go through Mouen?

A.112 Yes sir.

Q.113 So that you do know that it was at Mouen?

A.113 It is quite possible although I do not know whether that is the precise place.

Q.114 What officer would be in charge of the portion of your Battalion that would be at Mouen with the Tross?

A.114 An N.C.O. of our Company was in charge.

Q.115 Who was that?

A.115 He was a new man because our Company Spiess was killed on the way to Norrey. I know his name but I cannot think of it at the moment.

Q.116 What was the name of your Company Spiess?

A.116 The first man, who was killed, was called Von Goessen.

- Q.140 Was it before or after the adjustment in the line south of le Mesnil-Patry?
- A.140 The only time I ever saw the man was when I marched up into the line.
- Q.141 Now, when you went back to go on your course did you notice that all the Company Tross were located in the same general area at Mouen?
- A.141 Yes, there were numerous Tross. There were a few Tross in that area. I know for sure that the Tross of the Headquarters Company was there.
- Q.142 And you would normally expect to find Pinkernel then, in the location of this Company Tross; is that right?
- A.142 That is to be expected unless he was on his trip to Germany.
- Q.143 Now, are there any other officers whom you would expect to find in that area?
- A.143 No officers.
- Q.144 Was there any officer in the Battalion who spoke better English than the others and whose job generally was to interrogate prisoners?
- A.144 I believe Sturmbannführer Mueller was an adequate English speaker. I notice that he spoke much better than I did.
- Q.145 Do you know whether either Terwort or Bocker spoke English?
- A.145 I rather doubt that.
- Q.146 Do you know of any other Company Spiess or Stabscharführer who did speak English?
- A.146 I didn't know them. I can't say.
- Q.147 Do you know whether Pinkernel spoke English?
- A.147 It might be possible. I cannot say precisely.
- Q.148 If some officer did interrogate some prisoners at Mouen on the 17th June which officer do you think it would be?
- A.148 I think we had nothing to do with that sort of thing. It may only have been Pinkernel. I cannot say. All Company Commanders went back from time to time to their Tross with the exception of Kuret.
- Q.149 Are you absolutely sure that Kuret never went back to the Tross?
- A.149 I was with him practically every day and Kuret, in contrast with other Company Commanders, always lay in the front line.

Q.150 Did you go back to the Tross from the 7th or 8th to the 21st of June?

A.150 Never.

Q.151 And you say positively that you never went back to the Tross until the 21st of June?

A.151 I was never at the Tross.

Q.152 And you say the same thing is positive of Kuret?

A.152 Yes, but with the reservation that I was not with Kuret every moment of the day. He never said anything to the effect that he was going back or had been back.

Q.153 Did you have an officer in the Battalion-- I don't think I have an answer to that -- whose job it was especially to interrogate prisoners?

A.153 It would have been Obersturmbannführer Mueller as well as Obersturmführer Bischoff.

Q.154 Was Bischoff IO (Ic) of the Battalion?

A.154 The Ic of the Battalion, but that wasn't very important. The Battalion was too small for that to make much difference. Only from the fact that when we were in Billeba that he once in awhile had to go out for provisions that he was Ic.

Q.155 Did he speak English?

A.155 It may be presumed that he spoke English, but I do not know.

Q.156 Who succeeded TOLL in command of the 1st Company?

A.156 The new Untersturmführer who came from the Wehrmacht and joined the Waffen S.S. It is a well-known name.

Q.157 Who was the commander of the 3rd Company?

A.157 Hauptsturmführer

Q.158 TIEDKA?

A.158 TIEDKA.

Q.159 Now, who commanded the mortars?

A.159 An Unterscharführer.

Q.160 What was his name?

A.160 I gave the name in London. I cannot remember it now.

Q.161 MOEBIUS?

A.161 No, Moebius had the vehicles under him.

Q.176 Did you hear of a man from your Division who was charged with the offence of rape and who was shot by order of the Divisional Commander?

A.176 I have heard of such a thing, but it wasn't for rape.

Q.177 What for?

A.177 Desertion. At one of these Courts I was the defending counsel.

Q.178 When was that?

A.178 That man was shot on the day of invasion.

Q.179 Where?

A.179 Near Passe..

Q.180 I am speaking of an offence that occurred in the vicinity of Verson - Mouen?

A.180 I repeat again that I sat up to about the 24th in my fox hole and got extremely few notes as to what was happening farther back from my Company Commander who came up for a short time during the night.

Q.181 Did you hear about this man being shot for the offence of rape?

A.181 No sir, but I think it is quite possible.

Q.182 Why should Mueller have objected to your presence at the time he was interrogating the prisoners you had captured?

A.182 Well, there are two reasons for that. The first was that I was not on very good terms with the Battalion Commander and the second, that he seemed to object to me interfering in the proceedings.

Q.183 Did you and the Battalion Commander have any different views on the treatment of prisoners?

A.183 That I do not know. I never discussed such questions with him.

Q.184 What was your opinion of Mueller. Was he a man who was capable of shooting prisoners?

A.184 That is hard to say. If the facts show it, then I suppose it is true. I do not understand it.

Q.185 Was he violently or bitterly anti-British or anti-Canadian especially?

A.185 I could hardly say that.

Q.186 Was he liable to shoot prisoners if they did not answer his questions?

A.186 I would have to answer that definitely. He was a very strict and quite impulsive man.

Q.187 What about Pinkernel?

A.187 If I spoke about that man I can only say bad things and I do not wish to do that, and the same thing goes for Bischoff.

Q.188 I take it then that you think either would be capable of shooting prisoners?

A.188 As to Pinkernel, I do not think he could even do that. He was an old woman. It is possible he gave the order to shoot prisoners but he surely was not the person. He was an old woman, weak and cowardly. As to Bischoff, the very contrary. He was robust and hard, unjust even to his own men and for that reason I had a dispute with him. To me I regard him capable of shooting prisoners.

Q.189 Now of the Company Stabscharföhlers who might have been responsible for the shooting at Mouen?

A.189 I know these practically not at all. I know nothing about TERWORT except that he once "beetled" off when we were being attacked. He felt the necessity for removing himself. On the other hand, he had no business being up front anyway.

Q.190 Now, during the period that you have been a prisoner-of-war have you heard any stories from other persons with respect to atrocities which they had personal knowledge of, affecting British, Canadian or American prisoners?

A.190 No sir. I never heard anything. Moreover, it is very unlikely an officer would discuss even among other officers a deed which is a foul one.

Q.191 I take it then that you say that you have heard nothing by way of boasting or otherwise from any of your fellow prisoners with respect to atrocities which they have knowledge of or have heard of?

A.191 I have heard nothing.

Q.192 Are you satisfied with conditions at this camp? Would you prefer to be transferred to another camp?

A.192 Yes, I would like to go to another camp.

Q.193 Have you any camp to which you would prefer to be transferred?

A.193 I was very satisfied with Trinidad.

Q.194 I want you to give me the names of as many 12th SS Officers in this camp as you know of?

A.194 With me from Trinidad there came OSF Dinglinger. There are a few more here but I do not know them. I have no dealings with them at all. I know a few but I cannot remember their names now. There is

Q.187 What about Pinkernel?

A.187 If I spoke about that man I can only say bad things and I do not wish to do that, and the same thing goes for Bischoff.

Q.188 I take it then that you think either would be capable of shooting prisoners?

A.188 As to Pinkernel, I do not think he could even do that. He was an old woman. It is possible he gave the order to shoot prisoners but he surely was not the person. He was an old woman, weak and cowardly. As to Bischoff, the very contrary. He was robust and hard, unjust even to his own men and for that reason I had a dispute with him. To me I regard him capable of shooting prisoners.

Q.189 Now of the Company Stabscharföhrers who might have been responsible for the shooting at Mouen?

A.189 I know these practically not at all. I know nothing about TERWORT except that he once "beetled" off when we were being attacked. He felt the necessity for removing himself. On the other hand, he had no business being up front anyway.

Q.190 Now, during the period that you have been a prisoner-of-war have you heard any stories from other persons with respect to atrocities which they had personal knowledge of, affecting British, Canadian or American prisoners?

A.190 No sir. I never heard anything. Moreover, it is very unlikely an officer would discuss even among other officers a deed which is a foul one.

Q.191 I take it then that you say that you have heard nothing by way of boasting or otherwise from any of your fellow prisoners with respect to atrocities which they have knowledge of or have heard of?

A.191 I have heard nothing.

Q.192 Are you satisfied with conditions at this camp? Would you prefer to be transferred to another camp?

A.192 Yes, I would like to go to another camp.

Q.193 Have you any camp to which you would prefer to be transferred?

A.193 I was very satisfied with Trinidad.

Q.194 I want you to give me the names of as many 12th SS Officers in this camp as you know of?

A.194 With me from Trinidad there came OSF Dinglinger. There are a few more here but I do not know them. I have no dealings with them at all. I know a few but I cannot remember their names now. There is

one man here from Divisional Headquarters.
BRANDIS is here.

Q.195 What do you think of HANREICH?

A.195 I think very little of him. Coming over on the boat I had a dispute with him. He rather harshly spoke to me and said, "You perhaps do not realize I am still your superior" and I said, "Yes sturmbannführer". HANREICH is a low type but extremely conscious of the fact that he is an old fighter. He joined the SS very early and looks down on everyone like myself who only joined the Party and the SS at a very late date. In Trinidad there was what was called Sunday morning celebrations and at these celebrations the National Socialists in the camp foregathered. This took place with music and speech in favour of the Fatherland. For a little while I did not attend these celebrations and HANREICH took me to task for that.

Q.196 Who is this chap from Divisional Headquarters?

A.196 A young man about twenty-five years. He is tall and blond. His name is MEITZEL.

Q.197 His rank?

A.197 I believe Obersturmführer.

Q.198 Unfortunately, we are going to have to isolate you until tomorrow sometime.

A.198 Is it because you are afraid that I am going to talk to somebody else?

Q.199 Partly, yes. Have you anything yourself to fear in the camp?

A.199 That I have direct enemies I would say no, but there are a few people who do not like me because of my attitude.

Q.200 It is not in the nature of punishment at all, but we must be sure as far as possible that the prisoners we have been talking to have not previously been warned of the nature of the interrogation.

A.200 Yes.

Q.201 You appreciate that if you can be of assistance to us it may be to your advantage?

A.201 I want to repeat I said in London that I will do everything in my power, even be an officer who shot prisoners-of-war.

Q.202 You appreciate that our only purpose in carrying out this interrogation is to place the responsibility on individual officers and men for the perpetration of atrocities of war?

A.202 Yes.

while USF Greinke was seriously injured. The Battalion M.O. was seriously injured on 9th June (?), either through Artillery fire or bombing attack on le Mesnil-Patry; Canadian tank attack approximately on 10th or 11th of June when SBF Mueller was wounded through the left upper arm but stayed with his unit; on 10th or 11th June the heavy machine gun platoon handed over four Canadian F.W. to Battalion H.Q., among them an N.C.O. On approximately 17th June the Battalion withdrew to a second line. On approximately 24th June USF Stremme was ordered to proceed on a course dealing with "Goliaths". He left that same day. The Battalion was annihilated on approximately 26th June when OSF Kuret was captured and OSF Bischoff slightly injured. On approximately 3rd July the 4th Company went back to the area of Pacy near Evreux and OSF Bischoff too. On that day the remnants of the Battalion were formed as a Company of approximately 80 all ranks, and later about thirty men were added. Of the 12th SS Division in Camp Alva I remember SFB Hanreich of the Anti-tank Unit, OSF Meitzel of Headquarters (?), OSF Dinglinger of Sigs, USF Von Brandis, Sigs, USF Kronegger, Sigs, USF Stremme Pioneer Battalion."

BY COL MACDONALD

Q. 214 The contents of this statement are correct, are they?

A. 214 As far as I know. "here I put a question mark I would not be quite certain.

----- Document marked Exhibit "A" and attached to the examination of USF Stremme.

Q. 215 You have also prepared for us a sketch map. What is this? Will you describe it?

A. 215 You see the villages I have marked in. The first positions held are marked in thin, black lines. I presume that these thin, black line positions were held between the 9th and 18th of June. When the Battalion withdrew and assumed another position, these have been marked in double lines. I believe the time to be approximately from the 18th to the 26th June when the Battalion was smashed up. I know for sure that the Battalion Headquarters, marked red behind the first thin, black positions, was actually there. The later Battalion Headquarters I am not sure of as I was never there personally.

Q. 216 Now, what does that cross represent?

A. 216 By that I mean a church or a tower. I know exactly that there was a church in le Mesnil-Patry because I remember that we "blew" it in order to prevent observation once we had retreated. It is possible that I confused it with Les Saullets.

Q.217 No, that is not a church, that is what they call a Calvary.

A.217 There is some sort of tower in the village and it was "blown" by the Pioneer Recce Platoon.

Q.218 Now, to orient this map, will you describe where, on the Caen Sheet, this road running north and south intercepts the Caen Highway?

A.218 I believe I mean the road I am pointing to now. It must be this one.

Q.219 We will mark the intersection of this particular road: interception (Map Reference 906679, Caen Sheet). You show this road as more or less running into the southwest corner of le Mesnil-Patry. Actually it is slightly to the southeast of le Mesnil-Patry, is it not?

A.219 I cannot remember that so precisely. It may well be an error of mine.

Q.220 In any event we will indicate by map reference where the road eventually enters le Mesnil-Patry. (901699, Caen Sheet).

Prisoner-of-War Map is marked Exhibit "B" and attached to the examination of USF Stremme.

A.220 It is possible that we were only in Les Saullets and that I confused Les Saullets with le Mesnil-Patry.

Q.221 Was the tower, by any chance, in Les Saullets rather than le Mesnil-Patry, however?

A.221 That is an orchard and here were some apple trees in a meadow. (Witness indicated orchard just southeast of le Mesnil-Patry, and the apple trees on the east side of the north and south road just to the rear of the second positions occupied by the unit). I cannot say what was Les Saullets and le Mesnil-Patry. On my map I show "Grosses Gebaude" and that was what I considered to be the eastern outskirts of le Mesnil-Patry.

Q.222 What was the boundary when you were occupying your first position between your unit and the adjoining unit on your left flank?

A.222 I only know that we never got farther than the point I marked here where the 2nd Company was.

Q.223 That is not quite the question. Did you not have the 2nd Battalion of the 26th Regiment on your left?

A.223 Of that I personally know nothing. I never came in touch with them. There must have been a brief span with no people because otherwise my people would surely have seen some.

Q.243 Will you describe his appearance?

A.243 Small and thin.

Q.244 How old?

A.244 Twenty-four. Twenty-five, perhaps.

Q.245 How tall?

A.245 He was small, about as tall as Bischoff.

Q.246 And what was the colour of his hair?

A.246 Mouse colour. The officers that I have marked on my list as belonging to Battalion Headquarters may well have been there from time to time or quite often with the exception of the Division Liaison Officer. Tiedka once said to me that he had to discipline a man -- a Company Office -- back at the Tross, and that is why he did not participate in the attack on the 26th, and people hold that against him.

Q.247 Did you have any officer with red hair?

A.247 Yes, we had a reddish-haired blond chap, and that was USF Kurz. He was the only reddish-blond officer in the Battalion.

Q.248 Do you remember any particular non-commissioned officer or man who might have been back there who was red-haired?

A.248 I cannot recall one just now.

QUESTIONED BY CAPT. H. FOX, Jr.

Q.249 Have you heard of conversations either at this camp or any other camp wherein German officers or enlisted men have made any statements regarding their knowledge of war atrocities of American prisoners?

A.249 No.

Q.250 Are you willing, in the event that such information comes to your attention, to volunteer that information?

A.250 Yes sir.

(THE WITNESS WITHDRAWS)

We certify that the foregoing transcript consisting of 29 pages is a true record of the evidence given before us by the witness,
PW A763417 Untersturmführer Wilhelm STREMME.

Hofmanna Lt-col
Examiner

Schofield Major
Cross-Examiner

EXHIBIT NO. 2

NO. 1 CANADIAN WAR CRIMES INVESTIGATION UNIT

RECORD OF THE EVIDENCE

of

Paul KURET

(POW 10470, Obersturmführer, 2 Coy, 12 SS Engr
Bn, 12 SS Panzer Division (HJ))

Investigator - Examiner:

Major C S Campbell, MBE,
Canadian Infantry Corps, C.A.

Assistant Investigator - Cross-Examiner:

Capt WDS Morden,
Royal Canadian Artillery, C.A.

Interpreter:

Capt I T Burr,
Canadian Intelligence Corps, C.A.

Court Reporter:

C.28852 S/Sgt Christmas M H,
Corps of Military Staff Clerks, C.A.

The Investigating Team assembled at the offices
of the London District PW Cage, Kensington Palace
Gardens, London, England, at 1400 hours on the
6th day of August, 1945, for the purpose of tak-
ing on oath the evidence of POW 10470 Obersturn-
führer Paul KURET.

The Interpreter and Court Reporter were reminded
of their former oaths.

The witness, having been duly sworn, was examined
by Major C S Campbell as follows:

- Q.1 What is your number, rank, name and unit?
A.1 10470 Obersturmführer Paul KURET, 2nd Company, 12
SS Engineer Battalion, 12 SS Panzer Division
(Hitler-Jugend).
Q.2 Where were you born?
A.2 In Schramberg, Wurtenberg.
Q.3 When were you born?
A.3 3rd of April, 1916.
Q.4 When did you join the German Army?
A.4 5th of April, 1937.
Q.5 With what unit?
A.5 Pioneer Platoon of the Leibstandarte Adolph Hitler.

/2

- A.36 Big, 180 cms, slim, blonde, a North German, came from the LAA, about 25 years old.
- Q.36A Did he have any decorations of any kind?
- A.36A I don't know.
- Q.37 Where was the first area in which your battalion was located?
- A.37 South of Norrey-en-Bessin.
- Q.38 Can you tell us what the general frontage was of the battalion?
- A.38 I only know the sector of my company.
- Q.39 Where was the sector of your company?
- A.39 About in this area here. (Witness indicates map reference 926697 to 910696, Caen sheet 7F/1, 1/50,000).
- Q.40 What is your total company frontage in metres?
- A.40 I have told you before I cannot give the exact boundary and my memory as to the exact front is confused, but I estimate it at 1500 metres.
- Q.41 When did you first take up this position?
- A.41 In the night of 9/10 June. It might possibly be the night of 8/9 June.
- Q.42 Where were the other companies deployed?
- A.42 We were sent into action with the first company and the other two companies (3 and 4) lay further back in or near Mouen.
- Q.43 Was No. 1 Company on the right or left?
- A.43 On our right.
- Q.44 Where was the first attack made?
- A.44 On Norrey-en-Bessin.
- Q.45 What happened to that attack?
- A.45 The attack was thrown back.
- Q.46 What did you do then?
- A.46 We were disengaged and took up positions south of Norrey where we dug-in on the front that I have just indicated.
- Q.47 How far would that be from Norrey?
- A.47 On the first day about 600 metres, and when we disengaged again about 300 or 400 metres more.
- Q.48 Now, when you came to this second position, where you dug-in, what was the deployment of the companies?
- A.48 Left was the 3rd Company, in the middle the 2nd Company and right one platoon of the 1st Company. The other sub-unit positions I don't know.

- Q.49 Where was the 4th Company?
- A.49 I don't know exactly, they were partly distributed, and the next I don't know.
- Q.50 Where was the battalion headquarters?
- A.50 South of the main Caen road about two kilometres from my position. (Witness indicates general area of Cheux, IR Sq 9067).
- Q.51 How long did you remain in that position?
- A.51 Until I was captured on the 26th.
- Q.52 Where was your transport echelon during this time?
- A.52 In Mouen.
- Q.53 Who was in charge of it?
- A.53 I don't know. I presume that the transport of all companies came under the commander and the OC of Headquarters Company, but I cannot say for certain.
- Q.54 Who was in charge of No. 2 Company transport?
- A.54 OSchF DEMUTH.
- Q.55 How many men from your company were with them?
- A.55 About 25 men.
- Q.56 From the time that you first rejoined your regiment until the day you were captured, how many times did you see your Battalion Commander?
- A.56 That is very difficult to say - that I cannot say.
- Q.57 How many times were you at Battalion Headquarters?
- A.57 I myself was never at Battalion Headquarters proper, I did have contact with the Battalion Commander the night before the attack of the 10th of June in open country somewhere south of Norrey.
- Q.58 You told us this morning that you had been at an 'O' Group with the Commander of No. 1 Company and the Battalion Commander at a house in Mesnil-Patry. Is that right?
- A.58 Yes, that is right. I was given there my orders for the attack. That was not our own Battalion Headquarters.
- Q.59 Do you know what Headquarters it was?
- A.59 It was a Battalion Headquarters. I don't know the Battalion.
- Q.60 Was it one of the companies of 26 Panzer Grenadier Regiment?
- A.60 I don't know that.

Q.85 Was it before the battle on the 10th of June?

A.85 Yes.

Q.86 It was actually part of the instructions before the battle?

A.86 No, it was not -- at the same time of course he had suggested it.

Q.87 By the same time, you mean the time the Orders Group was held?

A.87 I cannot say - I don't know - we were so busy - we had so much to do.....

Q.88 You believed what he told you -- did you?

A.88 I certainly supposed it. I didn't say much about it nor did I have opportunity to ponder it.

Q.89 But you told your Platoon Commanders at your 'O' Group before the battle?

A.89 No, not before the attack, I cannot remember exactly when I said it, but it was not at the 'O' Group of my Platoon Commanders before the 10th of June attack.

Q.90 Did you tell them individually then?

A.90 No, it was something like this. At some time where we were standing above ground, I called the Platoon Commanders to me and said I just have this to tell you, "I have been told that on this front the Canadians are taking no prisoners". It took this form of address. And I believe that after that(long pause)... and it was in this manner that I also told the Platoon Commanders the following, "Keep your men close up and keep a good eye on them".

Q.91 Did you tell the Troop Commanders to pass this word on to the troops?

A.91 I don't know that -- I don't believe so.

Q.92 How would the troops get to know about it if you did not tell them or if your Platoon Commanders did not tell them?

A.92 It must have come to the troops somehow. I cannot understand it myself.

Q.93 Do you mean from yourself or the Platoon Commander?

A.93 No, as I told you, how they got wind of it I cannot say -- I cannot remember everything - who might have said it to the company.

Q.94 But you might have given that to the Company but forgotten about it now. Is that what you mean?

A.94 No, it is scarcely possible.

Q.95 Do you think that you could possibly be mistaken about that?

A.95 I must repeat that I scarcely believe it but nobody is infallible, but I must assert that I am practically sure that I never made such a statement.

- Q.96 If the soldiers in your company who were taken prisoner of war said that you did make such a statement, would they be correct or not?
- A.96 If the NCOs and men of my entire company say that I said this, then I cannot contradict them.
- Q.97 What effect do you think this information would have on your troops?
- A.97 I must think for a moment. It would make clear to the men that the position must be held and that a voluntary surrender of the position wouldn't enter the question.
- Q.98 Would it also have the effect of making them believe that it was quite alright not to take any prisoners?
- A.98 No, it wouldn't have this effect. It would have the effect of making our patrols which went out every night to get prisoners more resolved to carry out their duties. Such patrols were the principal difficulties in this sector.
- Q.99 But your company never took any prisoners?
- A.99 No.
- Q.100 What did you do -- kill them all?
- A.100 No, we had no contact with the Canadians until the 26th of June. It was a quiet front and except for artillery fire we had no contact.
- Q.101 When SBF MUELLER told you that the Canadians were not taking prisoners on this front, what did he tell you to do about it -- about this information?
- A.101 The order came from above and was repeated by SBF MUELLER to take prisoners. This was particularly important since he wanted to find what troops were opposite. He was also saying "bring me prisoners, bring me prisoners".
- Q.102 And did you pass that message on just that way to your Platoon Commanders?
- A.102 Yes, to every section commander before every patrol went out and I told them to make sure of how the front ran and if possible to bring back prisoners.
- Q.103 Did SBF MUELLER tell you where he got the information that the Canadians were taking no prisoners on this front?
- A.103 No - I don't know.
- Q.104 Did he tell you where he heard it?
- A.104 No, as I told you he just said it among us.
- Q.105 Did you discuss this information with anybody else - besides your troop commanders?
- A.105 No.

Q. 5 When did you join the Hitler-Youth?

A. 5 1938.

Q. 6 Is your father alive?

A. 6 Yes.

Q. 7 And your mother?

A. 7 Yes.

Q. 8 Do they live at the same place - same address?

A. 8 Yes, they live in Salzkammgut by Bad Aussee in Austria.

Q. 9 Is your father a member of the Nazi Party?

A. 9 Yes.

Q. 10 What does he do?

A. 10 He is a senior forester.

Q. 11 Have you any brothers?

A. 11 Yes.

Q. 12 How many?

A. 12 Two brothers - one is killed.

Q. 13 Were they in the German Army?

A. 13 The one served with the Waffen SS - the other one was too young to serve.

Q. 14 How old is the younger brother?

A. 14 14 years old.

Q. 15 When were you called up?

A. 15 I volunteered on the 10th of October, 1943.

Q. 16 And where were you posted when you first joined the army?

A. 16 To a training engineer battalion in Prague.

Q. 17 When did you join the 12 SS Engineer Battalion?

A. 17 That was in November the 28th, when the division was formed in Belgium.

Q. 18 What did you do in No. 2 Company?

A. 18 I was a rifleman.

Q. 19 Now, where was your unit when the invasion took place on June 6th of last year?

A. 19 We lay in Pacie-sur-Eure near Paris.

Q. 20 And when did you come to the Caen area?

A. 20 We took up position in readiness on the 9th of June and attacked on the night 9/10 June.

- Q.21 Were you with your company then?
A.21 Yes.
Q.22 What happened to the attack?
A.22 It was repulsed and we were driven back.
Q.23 What did you do then?
A.23 We regrouped and consolidated in a new position.
Q.24 How long did you stay there?
A.24 Until the 26th of June when I was captured. But on the 13th or 14th of June, I remember now, we did take up a new position perhaps one kilometre further back.
Q.25 Were you always up in the forward line with your company or did you ever go back?
A.25 I was always in the forward lines except for once when I went back to fetch rations from the Company Rear Echelon.
Q.26 Do you know where you went to, to get the rations?
A.26 I don't know what the place was called, I went back perhaps 4 or 5 kilometres.
Q.27 How did you know where to go - were there any signs or names?
A.27 The route was described to me at Coy headquarters and also I saw some small signs on the way - this sort - "MUELLER", and were signs of our battalion.
Q.28 Did anybody go with you on this trip?
A.28 I was alone.
Q.29 And that was the only time you were away from your company position from the day of the battle on the 10th until the 26th when you were captured?
A.29 Yes, I was always in the position.
Q.30 Who was your platoon commander?
A.30 Hptschf Killian.
Q.31 And who was the company commander?
A.31 OSF Kuret.
Q.32 Who were the other platoon commanders in your company?
A.32 USF Bauer was commander of one platoon and the 3rd platoon commander was Obschf Gerhardt.
Q.33 Now while you were in this position, did your company take any prisoners?

TRANSLATION OF STATEMENT of Mlle. P. BOURDOIS

by

Major JJ STONBOROUGH, C Int C, C.A.

I, the undersigned, Mlle. P. BOURDOIS, school teacher at MOUEN, Calvados, certify that I heard a young blond N.C.O., who wore the initials "A.H." interlaced on his shoulder and "S.S." on the collar lapel, boast that on the day before (the 25th June 1944) at the front near CHEUX, he had taken two English prisoners and, after taking away their cigarettes (which he showed me) and chocolate, he killed them.

Under the rear flap of his headgear he had a name which resembled DO(I)STCH.

Made at VAUCELLES de BAYEUX

the 1st July 1944

(Signed) "P. Bourdois"

rue Fourneaux

"A. Ochiltree", Sgt. 7687911

39 FS Sec

MOUEN GROUP

B-43258	Sgt	McLaughlin	T C	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/268, a/15 Jun 44
B144141	A/L/Cpl	Cook	E J	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/271, a/16 Jun 44
B-42653	Rfn	Bullock	P	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/268, a/15 Jun 44
B134348	Rfn	Campbell	J	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/271, a/15 Jun 44
B138483	Rfn	Cranfield	E W	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/274, a/16 Jun 44
B-49476	Tpr	Perry	C G	6 CAR	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/346, a/17 Jun 44
B138240	Rfn	Willett	G L	QOR of C	MISSING 11 JUN 44	2nd Echelon 21 A.Gp.	21/CAS/268, a/15 Jun 44

This is to certify that the above information is correct and has been verified as to authority with
 Records in possession at C.M.H.Q.

"M. Bluteau"

(M. BLUTEAU) Capt
 For Colonel - OIC Records
 CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS.

EXHIBIT NO. 67

(L) Je, souignée M^e P. Bourdois, institutrice à Bayeux, déclare.
J'assure certifiaire avoir entendue un femme sous officier
blond portant les initials A.H. échelé au rang de caporal.
et assis à l'ancien du coll. de vante que la veille (les)
25 juin 1944 sur le front de Cherbourg il avait
failli prisonnier Anglais. et après leur avoir
pris des cigarettes (qu'il me montrait) et le
chocolat. il les a tirées à tirer
de sorte qu'il portait un nom que n'aurait pas
à Godstech.

Acto - Vauville de Bayeux.
Le. 1^{er} juillet 1944
P. Bourdois
1. P. Bourdois
Nuy
a Ochiltree Sgt 7687911 39. F.S. SEC

EXHIBIT "B"

ORIGINAL SIGNED STATEMENT IN FRENCH OF
M^e P. BOURDOIS DATED 1 JUL 1944 RE-
CEIVED BY 7687911 SGT OCHILTREE, A.
39 F.S. SEC (BR).